

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Just a few examples of what you are talking about, we are talking about the role of the White House in promoting misleading intelligence when it came to how we got into the war and the Iraq's weapons of mass destruction or lack thereof. We are talking about the responsibility of senior administration officials for the abuses at Abu Ghraib. We are talking about the role of the Vice President's office and the award of Halliburton contracts, no information on that, no accountability. The role of the White House in withholding the Medicare cost estimates from Congress. The identity of the energy industry campaign contributors that met with the Vice President's energy task force.

We could keep going about the corruption, the lack of information, the lack of competence, and in fact, when we come back at our next opportunity in our next hour, we will continue to go on about that.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. How about the gentleman, I cannot remember his name, a couple of weeks ago came up who had \$87 million worth of contracts in Iraq he was in charge of and he was stealing money, hundred of thousands of dollars. In the 1990s he was convicted of fraud, but yet, this administration hired him again. That is incompetence. That is cronyism. That is an inability to execute the proper role of government.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we just got back from Iraq. We are not even a week out of Iraq. We visited three Iraqi cities, and it was my second trip. I can tell you this, that when you hear uniformed personnel say, well, you know, some of the money, I mean it is like you know people take some of the money for themselves; it is something that happens here in Iraq. This is an accepted kind of thing. This is the U.S. taxpayers' money, and we are just saying, oh, well, you know, that is the way things happen over here.

Let me tell you, when the auditor general really starts to report what is happening with the money we are giving, that is being taken away from U.S. cities and the U.S. taxpayer, meanwhile the majority says, oh, let us govern, we will make sure that we are fiscal and we are responsible, well, when we come back in the next hour I want to talk about being responsible. I think it is important we do that. We will be back in an hour.

I just want you to give the Web site out before we close.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
30somethingdems@mail.house.gov.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. RYAN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and to thank the Democratic leadership for allowing us to have the hour. We would also like to say it is pleasure and honor to address the House of Representatives.

IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCAUL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address this Chamber and appreciate the opportunity for some dialogue with my colleagues from the other side of the aisle and particularly Uncle Bill from Massachusetts whom I did yield to the last time when he asked me, and so we have a little engagement going.

I think it is constructive dialogue that we have. I know we disagree often. We are looking for the best thing for this country all together, Mr. Speaker, and disagree with the method of how we get there, and sometimes we disagree with our definition and analysis of how we approach these things.

So to begin my hour, Mr. Speaker, I would like to address some of the concerns that were raised in this previous hour, many of which I did not hear in great detail, some of which the philosophy I heard ad infinitum here one or 2 hours a night after our session every week for the last months.

One of the issues that came up, Mr. Speaker, was the issue of weapons of mass destruction, and yes, I have been to Iraq. I have been there three times. The last time there was I came back the latter part of August, and I make it a point to go to the places where some of the other Members of Congress have not gone. I make it a point to find soldiers there, generally I ask for Iowans, anybody here from Iowa. We sit down and talk, and I meet with people all the way up the line to the top brass and also to the U.S. ambassador, representatives of the Iraqi government. I have tracked this through the history of the liberation of Iraq and on through to this point that we are today.

It saddens me a great deal, Mr. Speaker, to hear some of the leaders of the party on the other side and a very small number of people on my side of the aisle who have lost their faith, lost their faith in their own judgment, Mr. Speaker. In fact, we had this debate here in this Congress in the fall of 2002, and this Congress voted by a solid majority to endorse the President's authority to use force to enforce the resolution of the United Nations in Iraq. Those resolutions had to be enforced, Mr. Speaker, and without that, there would have been no teeth whatsoever to the United Nations.

Our President did that. We knew that was going to be the case. We knew when the debate took place in this Chamber that there was going to be a majority decision. I would like to think when we meet here to have these debates, Mr. Speaker, that we stick with the decision of the majority. That is the will of this body. When the will of this body is reflected and the will of the Senate is reflected and that resolution makes its way to the White House, where statutory legislation the Presi-

dent signs it, if it is a resolution the President takes account of the judgment of the House of Representatives and the judgment of the Senate. The judgment of the House and the judgment of the Senate was to endorse the President, the commander-in-chief, and grant him the endorsement of Congress to use authority to enforce the United Nations resolutions, particularly 1441. The President did that.

There is a long argument as to why he did not have an alternative, and our troops went into Afghanistan. Our troops went into Iraq and liberated 50 million people, and they are grateful today, extraordinarily grateful today, to have that opportunity to be free.

If anyone doubts that, look back in your mind's eye to last January when the Iraqis went to the polls to elect their interim parliament. Eight to 8.5 million of the Iraqis went to the polls to vote, and they voted and they dipped their finger in the purple ink. They proudly and they, in fact, defiantly marched out of there with their purple fingers in the air. When they were threatened with their very lives for going to the polls to vote in that January, there were 108 attacks on the polling booths in Iraq by some suicide bombers, all terrorists, trying to intimidate the entire country from voicing their voice of freedom, their voice of directing their national destiny through their elected leaders. Yet, they went to the polls and defied all of those threats and, in fact, upset the predictions from the other side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker.

So the people that did not have faith that there could be legitimate elections in Iraq saw them happen, and those people that were so invested in failure, that they could not abide admitting that there was a success, began to explain it away.

Well, we had kind of an election, kind of a legitimacy came out of the mouth of JOHN KERRY. So how much more legitimate can you get when people defy a threat of death to go for their first time and vote for the first time in their lives, and legitimately, their argument can be made the first time in all history on that piece of real estate. They had that courage to take advantage of that opportunity, and they voted in greater numbers in percentage-wise than Americans did in the presidential election.

Yet, we had people over here that said, well, it is a kind of legitimacy; it really is not a real election; we really do not know how many people that did not participate that would have if somehow or another they believed in the process, had more courage or been less threats on their lives. Yet, they voted in greater numbers than Americans did, and they call it kind of a legitimacy. That was January.

October 15, by then this new parliament has written a new Constitution, another milestone, a milestone that set on the calendar a sequence of events that need to take place in order

to take Iraqis who lived under tyranny, of murderous torture and tyranny, once that is taken, the resources of the country, and focused it on building palaces for themselves and glorifying their own leadership of Saddam Hussein, at the very expense of the people, a country that spent less than 50 cents per person per year on health care, did not let the girls go to school, that did not allow freedom of speech or press or religion, a country where you could not own a satellite dish or there were not free newspapers or there was not a television station that did not project the very opinion of Saddam Hussein himself, that, today, on a very short period of time of liberation, which really took place in the latter part of March of 2003, now nearly every home, everybody in Iraq has access to satellite TV, which is access to the world.

I flew over up in Kurdistan up at Kirkuk, and I looked at the difference. I was over Mosul in October of 2003 and looked down. Two out of three homes had a satellite dish. I flew over the suburbs of Kirkuk up in Kurdistan, and I saw homes there. At each one of the neighboring homes were typical, about two stories, flat roof, many of them had three satellite dishes on one roof. All of those dishes would have been illegal just 3 years ago, Mr. Speaker, along with the mobile phones that are there, the cell phones that now are complete all across Iraq.

There is something like, and I get conflicting numbers, somewhere between 100 and 170 new newspapers, some of them printing the real truth where none of them printed the real truth when it was under Saddam's regime. New radio stations that have grown to significant numbers out there, and television stations, the media has gotten out to the people, and some of it is the truth. It is not all the truth. We all know it is not all the truth in this country.

One thing we have is the check and balance on our mainstream media, who has a certain desire to destroy our effort over there is the bloggers and the Internet. They do tend to get the truth out, and they are a check and balance. In a free country, you will get that check and balance, but people on that side of the aisle do not have that faith in this new freedom that 25 million people began to realize and appreciate in Iraq, that began the latter part of March of 2003, that freedom the Afghanis have known for a little while before that.

Afghanis that had not gone to the polls ever in that place on the globe now have, and they have freedom, and certainly there are uncertainties. Yes, they have enemies. A Nation that has really not known anything but war is not going to be at peace just overnight, and Iraq's had its share of strife. There will be more ahead of us.

We have lost 200 Americans in Afghanistan, and we have lost more than 2,000 Americans in Iraq, and their sacrifice is great value. It has great mean-

ing and it is profound, and their conviction and their demonstration of courage and their leadership and their sacrifice will echo throughout the ages, Mr. Speaker.

□ 2115

It is going to echo a long ways into the future in a way that never would have happened if we had receded from this challenge; if we had listened to the people on the other side of the aisle that wrung their hands and thought we should not have gone to Afghanistan but could not figure out how to say we should not, and so only one Member voted against going into Afghanistan, and that is all.

But we sit there, having lost more than 200 Americans in Afghanistan, and do not hear a peep out of this side. What is the distinction between Afghanistan and Iraq? The difference is between 1,800 American lives. All sacred in my mind. All precious American patriots in my mind. All deserving their legacy for which they paid the ultimate price. All of them deserve our very best, Mr. Speaker. All of them deserve for us to keep the faith, to keep the honor, to keep the pledge, and to keep the commitments that were made in this Chamber in the fall of 2002 when a significant majority voted to endorse giving the President the authority to use force if necessary, and when this Chamber established a policy of regime change in Iraq.

Now we are hearing it from the other side, over and over and over again relentlessly. And what is it about? I will submit this: it is about politics. It is about such a hunger and such a lust for power it would tear down the very destiny of the United States and put our American troops at risk because they want to be in the majority. They want the Presidency and they want the majority in the Senate and they want to change the face of America and send us down another direction that is against the will of the American people.

But why? Why would someone put our troops at risk for political lust? I do not understand that, Mr. Speaker. I look back in history and I wonder when, when has there ever been a precedent where the well-being of America, when disagreements that we have had in this country did not stop at our shores; when we did not have political campaigns that focused on our economy, on our domestic life and the future of America, but joined together to support our military operations overseas when at time of war.

How many of the people over here are saying wrong war, wrong place, wrong time? Howard Dean says a war that cannot be won. JOHN KERRY said wrong war, wrong place, wrong time. TEDDY KENNEDY said it is a scheme cooked up in Texas. Do they not think that our enemies listen to them? Do they think that our enemies know what we know about them, that they really are not the spokesmen for the foreign policy of the United States of America?

They are the naysayers, the critics, and the gadflies. The majority of the American people understand this. We voted in this Chamber when, and I will say the Murtha amendment or the Murtha resolution came up on the floor of this Congress, and that resolution said we should pull out of Iraq immediately. That was the recommendation that was made across the aisle, or at least by the news media. It was not verbatim to the resolution drafted by the individual. We debated that in this Chamber for 3 hours; and when the 3 hours were over and we debated the rule and we debated the resolution, at the end of that 3 hours, Mr. Speaker, the vote went up and three Members of the United States House of Representatives voted to immediately pull out of Iraq. Everyone else, Mr. Speaker, voted to stay the course, voted to support our troops, voted to defend their mission and ratified the authority and the direction that has been given to our military by their Commander in Chief, our President of the United States, George W. Bush.

Those are the facts. Yet night after night after blessed night the team comes down here and relentlessly assaults the integrity of the administration, rearranges the facts of history, and seeks to dupe the American people, believing that somehow or another if they can erode the confidence of the American people, they will not have any alternative but to accept these people as their leaders. It is a frustrating thing to watch. But it would be even more extraordinarily frustrating if I did not have so much confidence in the American people and in their judgment.

History has shown that in times of difficulty and in times of strife the American people have risen up together and that their judgment is sound. They believe in the principles, the Constitution and individual rights, and in freedom; and they know that freedom is not free. They know intuitively that if we are going to support our troops we must support their mission. We cannot separate the two.

We cannot say to a soldier or a marine who puts on that helmet and puts on that uniform and salutes that flag and then goes out and puts their life on the line, that we are for you, but we are against your mission. We can never ask someone to put their life on the line if we do not support their mission.

And we have asked them to do that. And duty and honor and country says that they do that, and they do that proudly. But when we look them in the eye, we know it is a dedication. They take their share of the risk. And when the grim reaper visits some of those homes, it is a sad time. And I draw my strength from those families and their belief in this country and in our freedoms and in our patriotism. It is stronger than the belief that we find in the average American household because they understand.

One of the reasons they understand, I think, is because they have also imparted those values to their sons and daughters who have gone forth to protect our freedom. When that call has come for them, they have stepped up, and we owe them. We owe them 100 percent full support. We owe them all we can that is due them if we are to respect their memory. We have to give our level best as they fight to preserve these freedoms.

Yes, we fight that out on the floor of the House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker; and we fight it out in the debates that take place in the coffee shops, in the workplace, in our churches and schools, and in our homes across this country. But I want the young people to understand that there are certain fundamental truths that we have to stick with; and one of them is that if we are going to support the troops, we must support their mission. We cannot have it both ways.

We cannot have our cake and eat it too. We cannot undermine their mission and say that we support them. And when we argue that somehow or another there could have been a better plan, and we Monday morning quarterback and look back over 3 years and say, gee, knowing what I know now, this is what the President should have done then. It does not help the cause.

When my colleague from Massachusetts seeks to discuss these issues in open hearings, I will not deny his right to ask for that. In fact, I will not deny a congressional right to have those kinds of open hearings. But I will say that it is not constructive for us to have these discussions out in the open. It is constructive for us to have these discussions behind closed doors, to reach a consensus and determine if we need to look further into any of these issues.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen \$200 billion get poured into a country for military support and reconstruction efforts, and by the way, the reconstruction efforts were the smallest part of all of that. As I mentioned to Mr. DELAHUNT, I have been there to review the construction that took place in Iraq, \$12.5 billion done by the Army and the balance of that, \$18.5 billion, that was done by other entities there, including the Seabees and others, subcontractors that were put together.

I looked at the roads and the sewers. I looked at some of the bridges and the streets and the water lines. I have looked at the generating plants. I went up to Kirkuk to see the mother of all generating plants, 725 tons of generator and turbine, two pieces bolted together which came across 1,057 kilometers of open desert and came on a caravan with other components of that mother of all generators which was over a mile long.

That generator, Mr. Speaker, had to arrive at that location out in the countryside near Kirkuk, Iraq, without a bullet wound in it. Because a bullet wound into the windings on that gener-

ator would have incapacitated it. But it arrived there safe and sound. They took a big crane and set it into place, the generator. They took the same big crane and set the turbine in place and then bolted them together. Several hundred Iraqi workers began to scurry around and put the pieces together of this mother of all generating plants.

Now, we are told that this is far too dangerous a place for people to invest capital, for them to develop anything or put any commitment into energy. But in that area, for all those months that they constructed that huge generating plant, and after coming across 1,057 kilometers of desert, and after they had to rebuild and reconstruct eight bridges to get the strength there to cross those bridges with that caravan, throughout all of that, there was one little attack by insurgents, and that was fairly feeble, which resulted in one wounded person from a little bit of shrapnel.

There was not a wall built around this generating plant. There is not a trench. There are not terraces pushed up with soldiers behind them all. There are not tanks dug in. They do not have Blackhawks hovering over this generating plant 24 hours a day. It is not sitting there rimmed with armed guards. Sure, it has a little security, but it is not ringed with armed guards. It is out in the countryside near Kirkuk, up in an area where the Kurds live.

And throughout all of that, there sits that generating plant, the mother of all generators, pumping electricity into Kirkuk, pumping it into the surrounding communities. That can be a model of the energy that is unleashed into that part of the country. And I might add that if this were a highly dangerous area, an area that you could not control the security in it, then would there be a 12-inch natural gas pipeline that runs on the surface of the ground down to that generating plant that runs the turbine that turns the generator? Would that not be a highly sabotagable natural gas line? And would they not take that up every night, if they could?

The reason for all that is that those folks up there are not interested in that. And 14 of the 18 provinces in Iraq are not interested in that kind of violence. They have a sense of security. They are building for the future. The children play in the streets. The families plan for their future. They go off on vacation. They go up to the lake and go swimming, like you and I do. Many places in Iraq have a normal, normal life. People on this side of the aisle would not want you to know that.

Many do not want Americans to know that during Saddam's regime he was killing his own people at an average rate, Mr. Speaker, of 182 a day. Now, this was a tough day in Iraq, Mr. Speaker, but I cannot remember the last day in Iraq that there were 182 people that died at the hands of violence. Every day that goes by there are another 182 Iraqis that are alive that

would not be otherwise if Saddam were in power.

He is on trial today, and in a few hours they will gavel in in a courtroom in Baghdad, and he will be back under trial again. They are putting together a record, Mr. Speaker, a record of the atrocities that were committed under the regime of Saddam Hussein.

I have met some of the people that were victims of those crimes. The other night I sat down in a coffee shop for 3 hours and talked with a young lady from Kurdistan. She had grown up there in that region, within an hour of Kirkuk. She has a friend, a friend that survived Saddam's gassing of Halabja where 5,000 Kurds were killed: men, women, and children, the most innocents of civilians.

We have all seen the pictures of civilians lying there dead, gassed to death, a mother holding her child and families lying there dead. One of this young lady's friends is an individual that escaped from that gas, that gassing death at Halabja and lived to tell the story.

As she told me the story of that friend, I asked her if she believed that Saddam Hussein had no weapons of mass destruction. Ladies and gentlemen from the other side of the aisle, I challenge you to try to convince that young lady of that. No weapons of mass destruction, when 5,000 of your neighbors are dead, when one of your friends has escaped the gas? How would you convince someone who had lived through that that it did not exist, because we did not find huge warehouses of gas, huge warehouses of chemical weapons, huge warehouses of biological weapons? Because we did not find a nuclear bomb affixed to the tip of a missile that had the capability of going to Tel Aviv? Would that have been enough? Or Washington, D.C.? Would that have been enough not to have detonated?

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the people on this side of the aisle have so much political capital invested in failure that they cannot abide victory. In fact, I challenge the people that will come out here on this floor in another 40-or-so minutes to define victory for me. Define victory for the American people.

□ 2130

Let us hear what is the upside of this. I hear a relentless drumbeat of pessimism night after night after night. The pessimism is so deep and so dark, I could not wake up in the morning and face myself if I thought the world were really like that. What is victory, Under 30 Group? How would you define victory? And I will submit that they will never, Mr. Speaker, define victory because the investment in defeat is so great and the fear of victory is so great that they know as soon as they define victory, they will not be able to raise the bar again and again. They will not be able to redefine victory again and again and again. They will not be able

to challenge the wisdom of this administration and continually give us a pessimistic viewpoint that causes so many people in this country to lose faith on where this Nation is going.

I will define victory. Victory was defined by this administration, in fact, more than 2 years ago. It was defined shortly after the Iraqis were liberated in March and early April of 2003. Our President laid these principles out clearly. It was already defined in advance, and now I can back up and I can tell you the sequence of events.

You liberate the Iraqi people, do so militarily. Our troops did that in a miraculous way. Even though detractors said you do not have enough troops to do that, Colin Powell had over half a million, you are going to do it with less than half, how can you hope to do so when you are going up against one of the largest armored militaries in the world? How can you go across the desert with your own armor in a fashion that has never been done before? How can you attack a city and liberate that city that is larger than any city that has ever been invaded and occupied by a foreign power in all of the history of the world. It will be another Stalingrad, they said. But before we got to the Baghdad, about 3 days in we got hit with a 4-day sandstorm and then there we were all bogged down in this quagmire.

It was said the Iraqis are the only people that can see in the sand, and here our troops were hiding. The argument is will be slaughtered by the Iraqis because they are desert fighters, and our troops do not know about that environment.

Mr. Speaker, it turned out to be entirely different. The world found out that our airplanes could see through that sand and they could identify the Iraqi armored columns. The Iraqis had their heads in the sand and they were waiting that storm out. And a lot of them did not live to see the end of that storm because we had the ability to see through the sand and we hit their armored columns, and we knocked much of that out during those days. And when the sand stopped blowing, our armored columns started up again and they headed up to Baghdad.

Mr. Speaker, it was the longest and fastest advance across the desert in history. They arrived in Baghdad almost in a sequential column between our Army and our Marine Corps from two different directions. On a Thursday they went in and drove around through Baghdad with a tank and a couple of armored personnel carriers and looked up at the hotels and buildings. Essentially they met no resistance to speak of. They came out of Baghdad and said we really have liberated the city, and they had. It is the largest city in the history of the world to be invaded and occupied and liberated by a foreign power. It is an astonishing accomplishment.

Was there an effort then to go forward from that martial law period of

time and establish a civilian government in Iraq, you bet. In Mosul, the liberation took place in March, and in May, they elected a governor and a vice governor from Mosul. They sat down and again to craft how to govern that region.

I met with those people in October 2003. They were doing business as usual. It was already usual in Mosul. So we went from liberation to martial law to the civilian government. We went to the Coalition Provisional Authority under Paul Bremer. Under that we had regional elections in some regions. We put the people that lived there in power. That was another great milestone.

Under the CPA, we had local governments that were functioning well. We needed to get the head of this government put back on again, and that was Paul Bremer's job to do that. He knew that we needed to hand over that authority to a Civilian Provisional Authority in Iraq. That happened in June. The date was set, but unlike most of the milestones for any other effort in history, the Iraqis and the American military did not just meet that deadline. Generally they get delayed, delayed, delayed, but they beat the deadline by 48 hours and took over control of Iraq with an interim civilian government from Paul Bremer and the CPA. Another milestone reached, Mr. Speaker.

And that milestone went on. As the interim Iraqi government began to put the pieces in place so they could begin to get some connections between Baghdad and the rest of the country, and it was their job to prepare for an election. That election took place in January. That elected the interim government, and their number one job was to craft a constitution. Between January of this year and October 15 of this year, they crafted a constitution. It was a tough task. A lot faster than we crafted our Constitution here in the United States of America. This Constitution that I carry by my heart every day I have a jacket on for a pocket for it, it was a struggle to get our Constitution established. We had a Constitutional Convention.

We had an effort for ratification. Essentially it happened in 1789. We had a Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, so 13 years and several months later, we had a constitution ratified by the people. We have not been in Iraq anywhere near 13 years, and I do not expect the effort is going to take anywhere near that long.

It was a struggle to establish this constitutional republic that we have in the United States of America, and it is a struggle to establish a free government in a region of the world that has not had one before. But the Iraqi people stepped up and reached each milestone and crafted a constitution. Now 108 polling places were attacked by terrorists in January in the election that elected the interim government, the interim parliament that crafted the constitution.

By October 15, 2005, the election that ratified the constitution that was drafted by that interim parliament, there were 19 attacks on polling places as opposed to the 108 that took place in January. That is a measure of progress, Mr. Speaker.

We look throughout Iraq and we measure progress after progress. But now we are sitting here with a ratified constitution and our interim parliament and an election coming up December 15. Of all of the milestones that have been laid out in this sequence that I have talked about, liberation, local elections, establishment of the Coalition Provisional Authority, an election to elect the interim parliament whose job it was to run the country, a constitution, you add all those things all up, and this election on December 15 is more important than the others by far because this election puts in place a parliament in Iraq that truly represents the people. It will be the voice of the people and it is a certified voice of the people. It will be, among the Arab world, the most legitimate voice of any Arab people in the world.

I would submit there is only one place where an Arab can go for a fair trial outside of Iraq, and that might be Israel. We are watching a fair trial take place in Iraq today, and that will be the second place in the Arab world where a person can go to get a fair trial. When this election takes place on December 15, 2005, several days from now, it will put in place a parliament that is elected by the people of the sovereign nation of Iraq. They will select a prime minister, and they will then be more legitimate than any other Arab nation that sits at the United Nations.

And the sovereignty that comes from that and the consent of the people that empowers their representatives in almost the same fashion as we consent as people to empower representatives here, will give this government the authority to move quickly and decisively down the paths of progress.

I am hearing naysayers. I am hearing detractors. Why? Why when we are roughly a week from time we are going to have a certifiable, sovereign nation of Iraq that has the ability to sit down and negotiate oil development contracts with some of the most effective oil companies in the world, to come into this country that is rich with resources, so rich with resources that oil seeps to the top of the ground, and I have seen it, Mr. Speaker.

So rich with resources that more oil wells need to be punched in and more pipelines need to be laid and refineries built, and the export of the wealth of Iraq will pour the capital back into that country, and we will see that economy start to grow and multiply and flourish. Why do we hear these negative comments and detractors? Do they not know that our soldiers over there want and need their support? That the people that watch al-Jazeera TV see these voices as quasi American

leaders. They see these as people that are directing the policy of the United States of America. They do not understand that the Commander-in-Chief is not listening to this every night. Thankfully he is not listening to this every night, and I hope he is not.

The Commander-in-Chief has to lead us down a path without regard to public opinion. He will take into account our judgment, but the destiny of this country is more important. If the mainstream media and the relentless drumbeat on the floor of the House takes the confidence of the American people down so low that they have lost their will, it is the job of the President of the United States to step up and take the debate to the American people and do the fireside chats in this modern technological world, lift our spirits up and give us the facts. I am here to help him do that.

He has given us some of these fireside chats and speeches. He understands, as I understand, that our freedom, our freedom depends upon our soldiers, yes, but it also depends upon our will. There is something that is a universal truth throughout all of history and that is a war is never over until the loser realizes they have lost. That is a fact, Mr. Speaker. War is never over until the loser realizes they have lost.

If you are down in the dumps and you are losing your soldiers and troops and you are losing your ability to combat a battle, losing your munitions, losing the funding network, you are really down and out, there would be some people in this country that think that I am talking about the American or coalition forces, and I am talking about Zarqawi's people. They are down and out. They can barely put together enough munitions to conduct any kind of opposition. They do not have a lot of logistical support. They are hiding in caves and cowering in mud huts in places throughout Iraq, and they are going out one or two every day dying for their cause, dying for a lost cause.

Mr. Speaker, I will submit that the people on the other side, the al Qaeda people, the Zarqawi people, they have it pretty tough where they are right now. A lot of them are dead. Perhaps 75 percent of their leadership is dead. We decapitated the number 3 man in Afghanistan within the last week.

They have been writing letters back and forth from Zarqawi to Bin Laden. We know they are short of resources. One of them asked, could you kindly send me \$100,000. Zarqawi wrote a letter a while back that said in this country we do not have any place to hide. This is not Vietnam. They do not have any mountains. They do not have any forests to hide in. The only place they can hide is in the homes of the Iraqis, and Iraqi homes that are willing to hide al Qaeda terrorists, he said, are as rare as red sulfur.

Red sulfur does not mean a lot to us here. I submit it is quite rare. Red sulfur fits in the category of maybe as rare as hen's teeth or chicken lips or

frog hair. It is a rare commodity. He draws the distinctions between Vietnam and Iraq: No mountains to hide in, no forests to hide in, and the homes they have to cower in where Iraqis are willing to house them are as rare as red sulfur, rare as chicken's teeth, rare as chicken lips, rare as frog's hair.

So they feel that taste of defeat. When they are about ready to give up, we can take the tone of that letter some months ago, and have to think they are very close to the end.

Then we hear the voice from the other side that says we cannot win. Howard Dean, This war cannot be won. The esteemed gentleman, the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, This war cannot be won.

In the same debate he said, Our military has accomplished their mission, bring them home.

Was not their mission to win? And how do you define your exit strategy? Victory, Mr. Speaker. That is how we define the exit strategy, victory. There is no other exit strategy. In fact, I would submit why would you want to leave.

□ 2145

I certainly want the Iraqis to take over the defense of their own country, and that is our administration's policy, and it is one that I support. There are over 210,000 Iraqis in uniform that are trained, and you will hear again from this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, that there is only one battalion that is combat ready. One battalion. Maybe there was a time there was only one battalion, that there was not one American in that was truly combat ready that had the logistical support that they could go out and engage in combat without cooperation, coordination with American troops and American know-how and American logistics and American ingenuity and ability. Maybe one.

Mr. Speaker, I would submit to you that 30 to 40 percent of the Iraqis that are in uniform, trained, equipped, ready for combat, having the courage to defend their country, 30 to 40 percent are engaged and ready to engage; and some of them have some American advisers there, and these people on this side of the aisle argue that disqualifies them from defending their country. I wonder what the mothers and the fathers and the wives think when they have an Iraqi soldier that is killed in the line of duty and they are told by the floor of the United States Congress that they were not really qualified for combat, they really were not ready to defend their country.

Mr. Speaker, these people are ready. They have the courage. And many of them are ready for combat. Many have been in combat. Most of them go in combat with American soldiers, and it is a good thing for us to have. I would not want to say there are 210,000 Iraqi troops with uniforms and equipment and training and they are all ready to go into combat right now and all we

have to do is just turn them all loose, Mr. Speaker, and they can all go into combat and at the same time, same day, same night American troops come back to their home bases, to their wives, their husbands, their sons and daughters and their parents. I wish they could, Mr. Speaker, but that would not be prudent. It would not be wise and it would not be good policy.

It would not be good policy not to have an American involvement there to go through a transition, a transitional period, Mr. Speaker, that provides for a gradual transfer of power so that the Iraqis that are willing and eager to defend their country are handed over those reins of responsibility in a fashion that ensures success. So maybe sometime ago there was only one battalion that did not have any American involvement. About that same time that you heard the remarks about one battalion, one Iraqi battalion that did not have any American involvement, at that time we really did not have any American bases either that were under the control of the Iraqis.

But since that time, we have 20 bases that have been handed over to the Iraqis to manage, 20 military bases. Have you heard that from the other side of the aisle? Have you heard that the Iraqis have taken over the control of 20 bases? Because we have confidence that they can provide the security and the logistics out of those places and dispatch their troops, take care of the communications, food and housing and training, all the munitions and equipment, the logistics that take place there and provide the security in the region.

Twenty bases the Iraqis have today that they did not have when the allegation was made that there was only one battalion that was combat ready. So you get a real twisted view here, because we have people that get out of bed every morning and they scour the television, they scour the newspapers, and they scour the Internet trying to find the most negative that they can so they can bring this down, hustle down here and trot out onto the floor of the House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker, and begin to inform the American people of the most pessimistic view point, not always substantiated, by the way, but the most pessimistic view point possible because they want to dispirit the American troops.

Well, that is some of the effect, only our people are so courageous and they do not listen to you all that much. But they are sure, in a word, encouraging our enemies. Osama bin Laden, Zarqawi, Zawahiri, Muqtada Al-Sadr, all of those people. They believe that the Americans are going to lose their will; and if we lose our will, so will the rest of the coalition forces. Last night I put a poster up here on the floor that showed a picture of Muqtada Al-Sadr, big old blow up of his bearded face, and the quote beneath his face that I heard come out of al-Jazeera TV in Kuwait

City. The quote was, he said it in Arabic, I watched the English subtitles, if we keep attacking Americans they will leave Iraq the same way they left Vietnam, the same way they left Lebanon, the same way they left Mogadishu.

Now, if you are an enemy, and you are dispirited like Zarqawi was dispirited when he wrote the red sulfur letter, and you hear that quote out of one of their leaders, by the way that same quote has come out of, in similar language has come out of the mouths of all four of those leaders that I have talked about, Muqtada Al-Sadr, the non-al Qaeda, the Shiite leader who is actually I will call him a revolutionary in some fashion. But Zarqawi, Zawahiri, bin Laden, Muqtada Al-Sadr, all of them have made statements that you will find out there on the Internet that says the Americans have left in the past. They have pulled out of places like Vietnam, Lebanon, Mogadishu. They will pull out of Iraq. Just persevere, blow yourself up one more time, get your 72 virgins, turn yourself into smithereens, take a few people with you if you can and you will be adding to this cause somehow and some of the rest of us will figure out how we can come in here and create this civil war that will split this nation into three different sections.

What is the future for Iraq if we let that happen? Think about it for a minute. What is the alternative? What is this idea that was presented by the chairman of the Democrat National Committee that we ought to evict ourselves from Iraq and pull ourselves out of there and go someplace where we are wanted. Did you ever know there was a need for an army or you were really wanted? Anybody ever invite you all in there and say, gee, we like you folks. Why do you not come in here and stay because we like the way you spend your money downtown. Actually, there is a place in Germany like that. They are glad to have us. But that is not a reason to send an army there. An army goes a place generally where you are not wanted to free the people that are under the tyranny of those who do not want you there.

But Mr. Dean has advocated that we pull our troops out of Iraq and go to another Middle Eastern country where we are more wanted, and then we can fight Zarqawi from there. Boy, you know, Zarqawi, I wonder if he is writing those press releases for Mr. Dean. That is what I would want if I were Zarqawi. I would be trying to convince Americans, get your troops out of here. Why do you not go someplace where you are wanted, and then Zarqawi would be free to turn Fallujah into an armed camp, to turn Ramadi into an armed camp, to turn Tikrit into an armed camp, to turn all of the Sunni Triangle into an armed camp and pull in money from around the rest of the Arab world and bring in and arm all the troops and recruit more al Qaeda and turn it into a training camp, and, yes, develop more weapons of mass de-

struction, both gas, biological to get the money.

We are watching what is happening over in Iran. Nuclear. Add that all together, take the advice of the chairman of the Democrat National Committee and pull our troops out of Iraq, go to an Arab country where we are more wanted so we can fight Zarqawi from there, Mr. Speaker? That does sound like something that has been put out by Zarqawi himself. And it would be the very worst scenario that we can imagine. We are there now. Zarqawi is at least under our thumb. We have him surrounded. We do not know exactly where he is, but we have him surrounded. So we have to stay there; we have to finish this job. And every time we squeeze them down a little more, a little more, it gets harder and harder, and Zarqawi gets ready to write a letter and to sound a little more desperate each time when he puts out a plea for help that goes to Osama bin Laden, who essentially has not had much of a voice in what is going on in this effort for a good long time, Mr. Speaker.

Pull out of Iraq. Go to a place where we are more wanted in the Middle East to fight Zarqawi from there. Think what happens if we ever pull out of Iraq. If we pull out of there, and it is not clear to history that we have a victory, if we pull out on our own free will, if we redefine victory ourselves, history will define it anyway. History will define victory as the effort that prevailed. And we have said here is what we want; we want the Iraqi people to be in charge of their own country; we want them to have free elections; we want them to elect a parliament, which they will do December 15.

We want them then from that parliament to elect a prime minister, set up a civilian government, a government that represents the people of the state of Iraq, a sovereign state, a sovereign nation. They will go sit at the United Nations, and they will have more credibility there than any other Arab nation, Mr. Speaker. That is our definition of victory, and it is going to take a while for the violence to disappear in Iraq. And the reason for that is, Mr. Speaker, that as I said earlier, a war is never over until the loser understands that they have lost. If we stand on the floor of the House of Representatives and tell our enemies that here is how you win, if we tell them we cannot win, but they have, some of them are going to believe us. I do not believe it. Some of the American people believe it. I do not believe it.

I believe that Iraq is going to be a certified sovereign free nation on the date of December 15, and maybe it will take a little while to count the votes, and maybe it will take a little while to elect a prime minister, and maybe it will take a little while to gavel in that first parliament, and it will take a little while for them to get all the kinks out of their new government. And it will take a little while to get the

enemy, the insurgents, purged out of that society.

But as they see this inevitable march, this inevitable march towards freedom, the enemy will begin to understand that they have lost. When they understand that they have lost, then we will have victory because the rest of the principles are there. We have followed the sequence of liberation, Coalition Provisional Authority, interim Iraqi civilian government control, an elected interim parliament, draft the Constitution, put it on the ballot October 15, get a great turn out, ratify that Constitution, and now set an election for December 15. We are now a free people. Free people go to the polls again, and I predict they will go to the polls again in greater numbers than the percentage of the American people do, because people that have never had freedom cherish it even more.

That will be the definition for victory, Mr. Speaker, when we see a free people that are controlling their own destiny and going to the polls and directing their own leaders. They have got their Constitution. It is ratified. They have a tremendous amount of natural resources, and some day very soon after December 15 they can sign a contract with one or a dozen companies that have the technology and the skills and the capital to develop that massive amount of oil that they have. It is theirs. It has been our principle that it has been their oil from the very beginning. Our Commander in Chief said that to the world. And, in fact, if you go read the Iraqi Constitution there are two references in there as to the possession of their oil, and it is their oil.

And it is there for the Iraqi people, and the Constitution defines that it will be distributed proportionally in a fair fashion and equally across the country so that there is equal development of Iraq from that wealth. And soon, within 6 months I will predict we will start to see the oil export from Iraq. Right now, the only thing that is really exporting from Iraq with any kind of profits are dates, and it is about half the date crop that it used to be. That can be improved too.

But when the oil starts to flow out, it is their oil, the profit is theirs, the capital comes in. And when you have capital that comes in, you know what you have. You have capitalism. And capitalism really is the solution to this. We have the military who are doing their job. And behind the military solution is the political solution which is taking place on December 15 in this election. And when that free parliament is established and they elect a prime minister, the next step is hand over some of this development to some people that will risk some of their capital to develop those oil fields so that capitalism can sweep into that country, sweep into that country and so the linkage of military solution, the political solution and the free enterprise

capital solution all come to pass, all in their sequence, Mr. Speaker.

When that happens, then we do have a definition for victory in Iraq. And we cannot expect miracles, and it is hard and it is bloody and it is costly. But they can become, and in fact I believe they are, the Lode Star for the Arab people. This inspiration that gets established, when people are cynics in the world think that because of what ethnicity you are, what tribe you belong to, what country you come from, what religion you might be, you cannot handle freedom, well, I agree with the President. Freedom beats and yearns in the heart of every person and all people yearn to be free.

Now we have not gone to war and fought and handed them their freedom. They fought alongside us and some of that freedom they have earned, and they needed to earn it because it is precious and it has more value if it is them earning that freedom instead of us. But I believe this has been a very noble thing that we have done, Mr. Speaker; and I look around the world and I think throughout history, when has this country ever gone to war against another free people? I will say never. Never once in the history of the world has the United States ever gone to war, a clash of arms, against another free people, because we resolve our differences in open debate here on the floor of the House of Representatives and the Senate and across this country.

And one of those things also that beats in the heart of all of us is we have a certain capacity for change in all of us.

□ 2200

That change is within us. It is natural, and it is human, and it is described pretty much in the book "The Case for Democracy" by Natan Sharansky. He spent a fair part of his life in the gulag up in the Soviet Union, and he watched how there they struggled for their very lives and very survival. And the effort that came from them just to stay alive every day consumed almost everything that they did, and he thought that was the world that a lot of people lived in too, but that was a narrow thing that he was in at the time.

When he was liberated from the gulag, he went to Israel, and he became a free person in a free society that had a democracy and open dialogue, and he went to the Knesset, and he watched that debate that was taking place there, and he saw that same energy go into the debate in the Knesset, sometimes arguing and debating and struggling over things that he saw as minutia because he had spent a lot of his years on survival, and the same effort on survival was being burned up and consumed on minutia in a free country.

And he concluded, and I think rightfully, that we all have within us this energy for change, this desire for change, and we will use that energy for

a constructive change whether we do so in open debate and dialogue like we do in this country, like they do in Israel, or whether we use that same energy and desire, when we do not have this freedom of speech, to take it out on our neighbor, take it out on our enemy, and do so in a violent fashion and often in the form of terrorism. That is the habitat that breeds terror, the habitat that is anathema to freedom.

So some years ago, shortly after September 11, we had a guest lecturer there at Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa. Benazir Bhutto, former Prime Minister of Pakistan. She gave a wonderful lecture, and it was fascinating. And afterwards we sat down and had a little one-on-one conversation, and I asked her a couple of questions, and one of them was what percentage of the Muslim world are inclined to be supportive of al Qaeda. How great in numbers are our enemy?

She did not hesitate. In fact, her answer was so spontaneous that I concluded that she had answered that question before, and she said, Not very many, perhaps 10 percent.

Well, not very many, perhaps 10 percent of 1.2 or 1.3 billion people is a whole lot of enemies, in my opinion. That is 120 to 130 million scattered throughout the world. We cannot attack all of them, and we cannot turn our military effort on all of them. We have to find another solution.

So I asked her then how do we get to this point where we can ever define victory? What is victory going to be? How will we ever craft a victory given this global enemy we have that is committed to our death, people who believe that their path to salvation is in killing us?

She said, You have to give them freedom. You have to give them democracy. You have to give them an opportunity for their future, and they will turn their minds, their hands, their hearts from hatred and killing towards their families, their neighborhoods, their communities, their mosques.

That is the difference, and that is the climate that we need to create. That is that climate that is there in Afghanistan, and that is that climate that we are in the process of creating in Iraq. That is how Afghanistan and Iraq can link together and be the inspiration that shows the world that freedom can echo across the Arab world the same way it did across Eastern Europe when the Wall went down on November 9, 1989. And that is some insight.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KING of Iowa. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's embrace and affection for freedom. We all aspire to that.

I think I might have misheard, but I guess what I am asking for, is the gentleman making the statement tonight that the invasion of Iraq, the reason that we invaded that country was to

liberate that country, or did we have another rationale when we debated here in this Chamber about whether to invade Iraq?

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, there were a number of motives, and I will concede there were other motives; but in the 60 seconds that I have left, I am not going to be able to address all of that.

I will just say that, yes, liberation was part of that; and, in fact, I believe it is the broader vision, this vision that has been brought to this global effort by our President. I think he is a leading thinker on this in the world. Not a receptive adviser, but I think he is a leading thinker. And that is why I raise this issue. It is bigger and broader than weapons of mass destruction. It is bigger than many of the things that are discussed here on the floor of this House, and I bring this message here so that we can see the benefits of the sacrifice and the reason to carry on and the price if we fail to do so.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, as we come back on the 30-something Special Order, I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT).

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, let me pick up where we left off. And where we left off, obviously, was my very brief conversation with my friend from Iowa (Mr. KING), because I can never remember a debate on the floor of this House or in any committee of this House where the rationale that was put forth by the proponents of the resolution authorizing the President to invade Iraq was to liberate the Iraqi people.

And clearly the headlines, we all remember the phrases such as mushroom cloud, links to al Qaeda, the potential for an imminent attack on the United States. The gentleman indicates that it was one of those reasons.

What I find interesting, Mr. Speaker, is why was Iraq selected. Because as I look over the map, if it was a combination of reasons, why did we not invade Iran where we had hard evidence relative to weapons of mass destruction, where we knew that they possessed the capability, where there clearly was a denial of freedom? Why did we select Iraq?

And, Mr. Speaker, if we were so concerned about democracy, if the White House had this unstated vision and goal, why did they put a coalition of the willing together that embraced some of the most tyrannical regimes on the face of the Earth? Why did we embrace Islam Karimov in Uzbekistan whose human rights record was the equal of the human rights record of Saddam Hussein? Why did Islam Karimov come to the White House and have a photo opportunity with President Bush? Why did we embrace